

BROTHER CLOUD, I HAVE A QUESTION

Updated September 16, 2015 (first published June 21, 2006) (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article) -

Anyone of sincere heart and sound mind is welcome to write to me. I enjoy hearing from people, and I benefit from the information and links that people send. I also benefit from challenges and exhortations, and I answer many of the e-mails personally.

But these days I am extremely busy, to say the least, and I simply cannot and will not answer all of the questions that people ask me by email.

You need to understand my situation.

I have been writing books since 1973 and have been receiving letters from readers ever since. Before e-mail, I tried to answer every piece of communication that included a question, unless it appeared to be merely a “hit piece.” But that was in the day when to communicate with a writer or preacher in another place one had to sit down and write a letter and purchase an envelop and stamp, seal it, post it, and wait weeks for a reply.

In 1993, the Way of Life web site became active and e-mail came into play. Since then the amount of communication I receive has increased dramatically. Today any person can shoot off a quick e-mail with no cost or effort. It has become nearly impossible for writers to answer the deluge of communication.

It is true that I should defend my teaching when challenged, but we live in a “new age” technologically that has changed everything, and there is no going back. We are doubtless at the end of the church age, and Christ is coming!

We have been church planters in South Asia since 1979, and as part of that ministry we operate a full-time Bible college. I also travel three or four months out of the year on preaching and research trips to many parts of the world.

All of this is in addition to researching and writing articles for the daily Fundamental Baptist Information Service (about 200 per year), the weekly Friday Church News Notes, the monthly *O Timothy* magazine, the major new books we publish each year, and spending time with my wife and kids and grandkids, and a ton of other things.

What I am saying is that I just don’t have time to answer all of the questions and challenges that people send me. If I did that, I would neglect many things that I consider

more important. It is that simple. And I am the one who will answer to Christ for how I spend my time.

Many people take offense when I give a brief e-mail reply to their questions. (They also take offense if I don't reply at all.) They think I am being curt because I don't give them a lengthier, "friendlier" reply. People who read my writings get to know me somewhat, and they think they are not strangers to me and I therefore should not treat them as strangers, when the fact is that I usually don't know them from "Adam's house cat"! And that's true even if they have written to me more than once.

The bottom line is that I am not the fundamentalist equivalent of the "Bible Answer Man."

I have supplied a lot of information that is freely available on the Web site. There are literally hundreds of articles and about 60 free eBooks. The answers to vast numbers of questions can be found there. I don't know anyone who gives away more extensively-researched, expensively-researched material than I do.

We also publish a ton of material that is available for purchase at a very reasonable price.

These materials contain the answers to most of the questions that we receive.

I can say right up front that if you write and ask me about this or that author or speaker or this or that organization or this or that movement, you probably will not get a reply. If I have written on that particular thing, the report can be found at the Web site or the Fundamental Baptist Digital Library, both of which have search engines. In 2012 we worked hard to improve the search engine at the web site, and it is very efficient. The search engine for the 2012 edition of the *Fundamental Baptist Digital Library* was also much improved.

If I haven't written on that particular thing, it is exceedingly doubtful that I will give you a private statement or opinion.

I can also say that if you write to ask me to read some article or web site page or to watch some YouTube video and comment on it, you will probably not get a reply.

And if you write to ask my opinion about what is going on in your church, you probably won't get a reply. I have learned that when I try to deal with such things with strangers and I don't have the whole story, I am not only wasting my time but am also positively wrong in getting involved.

I sincerely wish I could help everyone, but the reality is that I am only one man. I've never had anyone to help answer the e-mails. Therefore, I reply only as I have time and as I see fit.

Feel free to write, but you must understand that you will not necessarily receive any sort of reply. And if you receive a reply, it will most likely be very short.

By the way, I can promise you that writing repeatedly with the same question will not increase your chance of receiving a reply.

Yours in Christ,
Brother Cloud

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